TOWN
&
OUNTRY
HURCH

In This Issue

ichard M. Archibald, who writes about purpose and ways of advertising the l church and its activities, is pastor of Presbyterian Church in Fairfax, Oklaa. See Page 1.

he methods which some rural churches Iowa are using to give their members ctical help for everyday living are inreted on Page 2 in the article, "People l Come to Church."

Iary L. Moore, in her article on Page tates clearly the relation of the rural rch to the soil.

Iow one rural church helps its mems to buy farms is told on Page 5 by church's pastor, Paul E. Miller.

ome of the ways in which denominaal cooperation has been at work to t the needs of the community are given Page 7 by Richard O. Comfort, inctor in the department of the rural rch, The University of Dubuque, Iowa.

nother aspect of stewardship is pred by Robert L. Clingan, pastor of The erated Church (Presbyterian and Bap), Genoa, N. Y., on Page 8.

. A. Edwards (see Board of Editors) forth Shaw University's "Five Year n for Rural Extension Work" on Page 9.

Philip Humason Steinmetz, the author "Growing Grass Roots"—see Page 11—n Episcopal minister and the director of successful united church program in nfield, Mass.

For information concerning the Lincoln nvocation, see Page 16.

No. 55
October, 1949

Advertising in the Rural Church

RICHARD M. ARCHIBALD

• The purpose of advertising is to influence people to buy your product. Our product is a way of life based on a right relationship with God. Church advertising is directed to two groups:

1. To the people of the church, so that they may become and remain aware of the full program of the church.
   a. The aims of the church and the special aim of each church year or season must be kept before the people.
   b. The ways of realizing these aims must be known. The time, place and nature of meetings must be advertised.
   c. Each group within the church should be informed of the activities of other groups within the church so that the church moves forward as a unit and not as sections.
   d. The church should be in touch with things outside of the church group. Activities of the neighborhood, state, nation, world, church councils, etc., should be advertised.

2. To people outside of the church we advertise that they may come to the church, take part in its program, and become church members.
   a. We also keep the community aware of the importance of the church, and the program of the church.
   b. We advertise the church so that there may be community-wide cooperation in advancing the welfare of the community.

Qualities of Advertising

Good advertising must be simple. Give people something that they can remember. Make it as short as it can possibly be and still have all of the necessary information. Do not use words that are not well known. Answer these simple questions in all of your advertising: what? when? where? how much? Have type plain and readable. Keep your voice clear and distinct.

Consistency

Don't blare an advertisement for a worship service from a sound truck or advertise your Hallowe'en parties in Old English type. Let your advertising match your product in spirit. Worship programs should be announced with dignity and parties with gaiety.

When you use several methods of advertising for one project, keep them related. If you choose to have a Rainbow Banquet (it's a lot of fun) decorate each table in a different color of the rainbow—yellow, red, etc.; sing songs of the rainbow—"Am I Blue?" "The Wearing of the Green," "Around Her Neck She Wore a Yellow Ribbon"—plug the title, "Rainbow Banquet" in all of your advertisements.

Attractiveness

Lavender and bright red together are not attractive. Keep your advertising in good taste. Neat, clean cut, well composed advertising is the most effective advertising. All art is a matter of taste. Choose your words, type, paper, colors with taste that they may be attractive.

Anything that attracts attention may be considered by some to be advertising. It is not. Sometimes you attract attention that does more harm than good, such as a church fight reported in the newspapers or a broadcast of a poor sermon. Keep it attractive and in good taste.

Design in Advertising

It would be ideal if all church publicity were prepared by trained advertising designers, but that cannot be. If there is a good artist in the church or neighborhood, get him or her to help with the work. Once you get a good one, let the artist do the designing. Ministers especially think that they know most of everything about anything. They do not. If you can get a good designer, give him the job and explain the character of the thing to be advertised and then let him go to work. Don't tell a designer how to design!

HOLBROOK LIBRARY
PRESTON SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

Most town and country pastors will be dealing with the local small-town print shop. Remember that a printer is no more an advertising designer or lay out artist than a carpenter is an architect. Remember that, but don't tell the printer that. Together try to work out a nice piece of printing. Remember the qualities that make it: simplicity, clearness, consistency, and attractiveness.

Land and Hunger

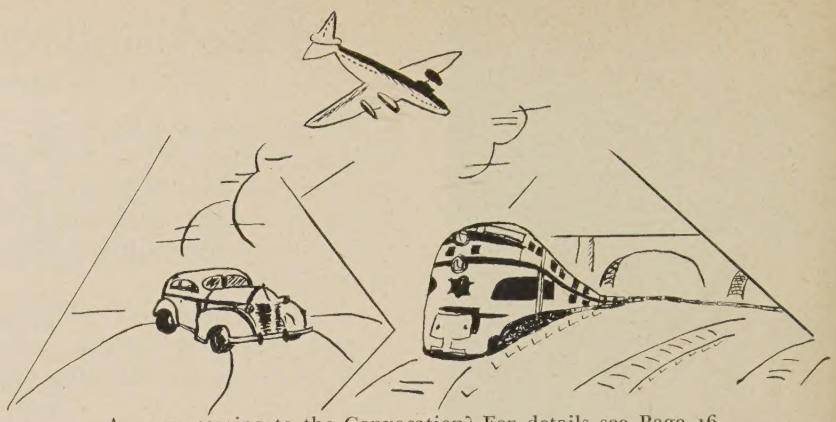
• The farmers of our great nation had a larger production of food supplies last year than ever before, yet millions of people in the world are still hungry.

An explanation of this paradoxical statement and proposals for the alleviation of the critical plight of the millions of hungry people through "sound land-use principles and conservation measures" were presented by Henry S. Randolph in a recent issue of *Social Progress,* publication of the Division of Social Education and Action of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Philadelphia, Pa.

The major answer to this problem, Dr. Randolph believes, is "a world soil conservation, land development and land-use policy and program," to which the church—through leadership, education, guidance and inspiration—must give its support. For it is only with such a program that "the fullest possible development and equitable distribution of God's gifts of land resources" can be effected.

As director of the department of rural work for the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., the author has a vital concern in the correlation of the saving of "souls and soils," and says that the church "must be a conserver of land and homes if it would build a community of self-respecting, hopeful and mutual-aiding people."

The earth has potential resources to feed all its people, but unless we find "the best way to utilize our natural resources," the ultimate goal of peace in the world can never be achieved.



Are you coming to the Convocation? For details see Page 16.

People Will Come to Church

But With So Many New Interests It Requires Work By Rural Congregations To Hold Them.

• Rarely were their homes erected before the early settlers would set up a church. For years thereafter, such rural meeting-houses exerted an influence on the community. Do they still?

"If every family that lived in the community would come," said a board member of a rural Methodist group, "we would have a real church. But folks have so many other interests now."

Gene Siekmann, pastor of a Presbyterian church in Butler county, Iowa, put the problem in this way:

"There is a great future for the rural areas of Iowa. Scientifically, we are way ahead. Spiritually, now, we have to keep up."

Dedicated to Cause

Here and there over Iowa, there are enthusiastic, consecrated, and (let's not omit) also well-paid pastors who, with the support of their congregations, are helping them keep up.

To that cause, Siekmann and his wife are dedicated. Still working on his seminary course, he has taken over the duties of a pastorate.

"There are too many young couples now," he stated, "that are not in any church on Sunday. They will come, if you give them something. Not just for Sunday, but something practical which they can apply on Monday, Tuesday and so on. And, for our Sunday schools, we need more teachers who can appeal to the young people."

The Methodist board member put in this comment: "Our pastor preached at another charge while we had Sunday school here. I think the minister needs to be present in the Sunday school."

"The young married folks are the most active group in our church," said Harold A. Wisner, of the Golden Congregational Church in Delaware county. Wisner majored in sociology at college, took a summer course in agriculture at Iowa State College, and is still in seminary work at Dubuque University. He has had this charge for over a year and a half.

The Golden church is on the fringe of four school districts. "It was startling to see," said Wisner, "how the young adults that came to our church didn't know each other. So we started meeting, at one home and another, once every month.

"We'd have devotionals, discussion, usually on some family topic, eat, then have a recreation period. And we took up bowling." Twice a month, their group—anywhere from a dozen to twenty or more—goes over to the bowling alleys in a near by town.

A Painting Project

Wisner was discovered in the midst of a painting project. The church had been founded in 1870. In 1939, the present structure, with

towering spire, had been built. ut we're just now doing the finish- ; touches," explained Wisner.

Some ten men and women were ıt day engaged in repainting pews d wainscoting. Color was an off- ıite, trimmed in a dark brown. isner was official paint mixer. very church I go to, they redec- ıte," he said. "This is the third ırch I have helped to paint."

Crews were going, day and eve- ıg. It was Wednesday, and the ırch had to be fit for a big wed- ıg the following Sunday.

Young adults seemed scarce at the ıion Presbyterian Church, in inton county. The pastor, Alfred kens, had arrived, three weeks evious, fresh from rural church lds in the state of Washington. ıt there were plenty of younger ople to work with.

Ekkens has had experience in oir leading. He and his wife plan have evening "singspiration" etings for the young folks. He ll take over the high school Sun- y school class himself.

An older pastor, D. J. Sessler, of e Unity Presbyterian Church in ıtler county, put it this way:

ajor Emphasis

"Our major emphasis is to create irituality in the hearts of the peo- e. By that I mean a God-con- iousness in people. When you have church with just projects, it falls ıt after the man who sponsored em is gone. But a spiritual people ill be interested in all the better ings."

Then the church becomes a nat- ral meeting-place for 4-H Clubs ıd the like—any enterprise that is benefit to the community. As a utheran minister put it: "We want clergy that does more than preach, ıptize, marry and bury."

In Wisner's church, a men's club eets on Monday evenings once a ıonth to study agricultural prob- ms. Sacredness of the soil which ırmers have in trust is stressed in l of these rural churches. This car- es over to the "God's portion" plan raising funds used in Wisner's ırch.

At a special service before planting time, cards are handed out. Then, at an auction in the fall, all the pledged produce is cashed in. At the same time, the big annual church dinner is served.

But, to go back to Sessler's church, and the results of his work there. Some 17 years ago, he found it a struggling congregation with only twelve or fifteen loyal people.

"There was no paint on the building," he said. "Weeds grew up to the windows. The church sat in a mass of slough-grass—no place to park."

When he started in to cut those weeds, folks realized he had a concern for them. "To win people," Sessler said, "first you've got to be a Christian yourself. You've got to be tolerant—to overlook a lot of faults in your people.

"You've got to have their well-being at heart, both spiritually and materially. A pastor can not do any good work when his people don't love him."

Influential Church

Now, the same church stands on a beautifully landscaped lawn. There is talk of enlarging the building. For there is hardly any room to accommodate the crowds that come Sunday after Sunday.

The year that Sessler came, the entire budget of the church was $231. Last year, for local budget and benevolences, contributions totaled over $8,000.

Ekkens added a thought on men's meetings. "Men are quick to throw an organization overboard," he said, "if it has no good programs."

So their programs are planned at least two months in advance. "At one," he said, "our men are to entertain their wives at a banquet. The men will cook and serve it all themselves."

Getting the people, then having a program—that's the secret of the influential church. A religious survey of the community makes a good place to start. It is first of the ten points for "making the most of a country parish," given by Rev. Christian Haupt. Second, is a plant to work with.

The Amity United Presbyterian Church, in Tama county, from which pastorate Haupt recently retired, offers a good example. It has a large sanctuary, with choir room and organ. There's plenty of Sunday school space.

Just off the sanctuary is a mothers' room. They didn't want a nursery, Haupt explained. But here mothers may take their small babies, when they are fussy, without having to miss too much of the service. That way, the children grow up in the habit of attending church.—*Wallace's Farms and Iowa Homestead,* Reprinted by Permission.

Branches of the Same Vine

• A recent issue of the *Gospel Messenger,* Elgin, Ill., carried a guest editorial by Ira W. Moomaw entitled, "The Message of the Church to Rural Life." In this article Dr. Moomaw states that life is not to be divided into sacred and secular compartments but that "we are all stewards of God's created resources . . . the church which brings the redemptive message of God's love and concern to bear upon every area of life—in the fields, in the school, in the village and in the home—will give a sense of Christian direction to both community and national life which will strengthen and discipline men for ever-widening influence and service. For this reason the influence of the rural minister extends far beyond the community he serves."

The Church and Conservation of the Soil

MARY L. MOORE

• "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This statement is of tremendous reach, for it declares that the whole universe has come into being by the will and act of God.

To a degree not commonly appreciated the Bible is a rural book and the relationship between its message and the soil is an intimate one. The fundamental principle of Israel to the soil was that God was its creator and owner, and had entrusted it into man's keeping as His steward. Man was "created in the image of God" and was to be God's fellow-worker in subduing and keeping the earth.

Throughout the Old Testament we find evidences of a continuing struggle against the concentration of land in the hands of a few. The efforts of the kings of Israel to accumulate land was strenuously resisted. Land-grabbing was regarded as one of the gravest dangers to the national welfare. There was also concern for the land itself, for its continuing fertility, for its care, as evidenced by the law of the Sabbath year which required that every seventh year the fields were to be uncultivated.

Present-day Responsibility

Man has a moral responsibility to the soil, and failure to accept this responsibility brings judgment. One cannot receive all these privileges without bearing the obligation to react and to partake, to keep, to cherish, and to cooperate.

Not many decades ago the United States was a nation of abundant soil resources but today, because of exploitation and misuse, we are threatened by the most powerful enemy to man, the extinction of the earth's thin covering, the film of life. We were slow to realize how grave conditions in our own land were.

Soil conservation is certainly a concern of every alert citizen, or it should be, but why should it be a special concern to the Christian? If we converted the percentages of the acres of ruined cropland into human terms, we would begin to sense the economic, social and spiritual implications of soil erosion. We would see the uprooting of families, the breakdown of rural institutions, schools and churches, widespread poverty with its consequent disease and suffering, and countless other evils.

The church, if faithful to its calling, must be concerned with the welfare of people and with all that affects their welfare favorably or adversely. Another reason for concern for soil conservation is the fact that people on eroded soil cannot support a church program adequately. The low economic level makes it impossible for them to become participants in any social or religious organization. Thus we can easily see that soil erosion affects communities and individuals, economically, socially and spiritually. Life becomes such a struggle for mere physical existence as to warp and crush the human spirit, bringing revolutions, wars, migrations, or political and social decadence.

Thus for the very endurance of civilization an ethical approach to land use as a trusteeship, to be used and handed down in a productive condition to succeeding generations, becomes imperative. The fertile or sterile lands which are passed on to feed future civilizations are, apart from blood descendants, our most direct link with the future.

What is being done?

Every state in the nation has passed an enabling act which permits farm people and land owners to organize local soil conservation districts. These districts are run on democratic principles. Organized by the local farm people and administered by them, soil conservation districts provide the means and the methods of coordinating all efforts for the application of complete conservation on the land. One of the greatest sources of aid comes from the United States Soil Conservation Service, an agency of the U. S. D partment of Agriculture. Most the help is technical assistance enable farmers to develop and p into effect farm conservation pla themselves.

This brings me back to the begi ning—that God is the Lord of lif He, not man, created the heaven the earth, and all them that dwe therein. If we are to live, we mu recognize our dependence upon th power of God manifest in soil an air, sun and water. Our abuse an wastage of the soil and its resourc is a denial of the fatherhood of Go and the brotherhood of man.

Living in the present age th verse should challenge us as neve before: "While the earth remai eth, seedtime and harvest . . . sha not cease."

Personal Problems of Church Members

• Until the churches become mo concerned for the individual pro lems of their members than they a for the size of their buildings an their prestige as institutions, there little hope of their redeeming t world, Dr. Roy A. Burkhart, past of the First Community Church Columbus, recently told an audien of professors and research specialist

"Our schools and churches," sai Dr. Burkhart, "are not leading pe ple to grow big enough to be creati free men. We are scientific maste but moral morons. We can condu war for we know machines but w cannot conduct peace, for we do n know men."

Using his own church as an e ample, Dr. Burkhart declared th *the most effective guidance in me tal health comes when individua within the church form small grou to help one another by sharing e periences of emotional upsets.*

"The church should be a researc foundation in the secrets of life, Dr. Burkhart concluded. "This i volves insight into the nature an purpose of God; into the meanin of, and reality of, prayer and Go led living; into the question of ho people can get the power to do wha they know is right.

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A Church Helps Its Members Buy Farms

PAUL E. MILLER

• Ever since the ministry in a rural church became my life work, a dream has nestled in the back of my mind. It was to have a rural life committee or placement committee* which would establish young married couples on the land surrounding our rural churches. I hoped they would be people whom the young men could trust and come to for counsel when they were in need.

Allow me to tell you about some specific work of such a committee; then you may judge whether or not my dream has come true.

A young couple worked for a dairyman about twenty miles from their home church. They desired to locate in their home church community. They came and asked the church committee for advice. One farm was looked over, and the advice was not to take the farm because the land price and the producing ability of the farm made it a poor buy.

Near-by was an eighty-acre farm that came up for sale at $150 per acre. The young man was able to pay one-tenth of the purchase price to hold the farm. The committee went to work and made application for a parish loan from our national church office. Brother I. W. Moomaw came out to meet the young couple and the committee and also to look over the farm. The loan was granted with the requirement that the local committee would have general oversight of the farm in case the young man sought their help.

The Committee Offers Guidance

This past spring, there were management problems that piled up on this young man, and he came to the committee for help. They spent some time thinking through some of the knotty problems. This fall the committee was back again to give their counsel and help. It was real missionary work in a very vital place in the life of a rural church.

The scene shifts to another farm in the community. This one has forty acres of timber and eighty acres of farm land. An estate put this farm on the market for $75 per acre. A young man in the next church community had married a girl from this community. They were without a place. We took this young man out to see the farm. He was interested. The committee came in and looked over the property, and the young man made the down payment to hold it. One of the committee went with him to the Federal Land Company. After the appraisal was made, the negotiations were completed and the young couple had a home of their own.

A Brother in Need

Last fall, the young man was seriously injured. When it was time for his fall payment, the two churches from which they came helped to make the payment and also helped to pay the hospital bills. It was my privilege to take the money to pay the man at the Federal Land Company. It was revealing to see the effect this payment had upon him; he was willing to waive payment under these conditions. There were other tasks like digging and filling a silo, fence building, corn picking, and the like in which the men of the church were eager and ready to help. These were men who worked.

Scene three moves to an eighty-acre farm which a young man rented from his uncle. The nephew wanted to purchase the farm, and the uncle agreed to sell him the forty acres with the buildings on it. The committee was called to place a value upon the forty acres. After the committee had done its work, the price they agreed upon was $150. This

* The Placement Committee of the Church of the Brethren in Adel, Iowa, of which the author is pastor, is elected by the council of the church. One member is elected each year and serves for a three-year term. The Committee does not lend money but has helped to secure loans in some instances. The only occasion of a loan being procured from the Committee is told in this article.

was below what it would have brought on the market. The nephew agreed to that figure. His uncle said that he felt it was a little high. He would sell the forty for $5,700, and the nephew could have as much time as he wanted and would need to pay only three percent interest. Need I say that it took little time for the nephew to own the forty acres. Men of this calibre help keep the farms in the church families. My dream is not just fantastic.

Drama in Real Life

The picture changes to still another farm of 120 acres and fourteen heirs who were getting shares from the estate. It took some time to get the details cleared up for sale. Appraisers set the price at $150 per acre. The committee looked the farm over and felt that the farm would sell quickly at that price. Only by advancing some personal money were they able to hold the farm.

There was a young married couple in need of such a farm. The committee decided they should have a chance to buy it. The couple were pleased and said they could pay down enough so they would have to borrow only $12,000. I watched this young man have the contract assigned to him in a lawyer's office about six weeks later. He wrote $1,000 checks for each of the two committeemen who had advanced personal money. They did not charge him one cent of interest. The committee was ready now to help the young man arrange a $12,000 loan. They were making plans when a doctor friend of the family offered to lend him the amount at four percent interest. You may read about such stories in fiction form, but for me dreams that come true are much better.

Since we have lived here in the Adel community the Placement Committee has been called in to give counsel on eighteen farms. I know of fourteen farms that have been purchased. Several young men have been helped to rent farms. In other cases, sons or sons-in-law have been started in farming. This has happened in at least seven instances, which means they will have a chance at purchase some day. If we are able to hold the land already existing in Brethren hands and gain one or two a year, it will make a great deal of difference to the church in twenty years. This also is a part of my dream.

A Small Farm in the Hills of Maryland. *Photograph by U.S.D.A.*

A New Parsonage Church Farm

The story concludes as we shift to a problem in this rural church. A parsonage is to built beside the church. An estimate by the contractor and the architect called for eighteen to twenty thousand dollars to build the house. Plans were complete and blueprints were ready to be made. Then an eighty-acre farm joining the church ground was for sale. An offer was made to the church to appoint one member of a committee of three to appraise this farm, and the chairman of the Placement Committee was chosen. He, with two other men, set the appraisal at $18,000. The owners of the farm considered this and offered to take $20,000 for the farm. On it is a modern house and several other good buildings. This house can be used for a parsonage.

A Common Task Unifies

The church accepted the farm o fer. It is to receive one-fourth the present crop on the farm. At th present time, the finance committe of the church has the farm withi $2,000 of being completely paid fo The crop this year, plus some othe equipment to be sold from the farm will nearly complete the paymen on the farm. Next year the me plan to operate the farm ground a a Lord's acre project.

Thank God for real men wh work. Dreams are coming true.

—From *Gospel Messenge* reprinted by permission

Your Harvest Festival

• If you have overlooked orderin *An Order of Service for a Harves Festival* for this year, you may sti secure copies from your denomina tional board or from the office the Committee on Town and Cou try, 297 Fourth Avenue, New Yor 10, N. Y., at the following rates Single copies, 5c each; 100 copie $1.00; 250 copies, $2.05. Carriag extra on quantity orders.

Denominational Cooperation in a Community

RICHARD O. COMFORT

"Be ye doers of the Word and not arers only" is an admonition ıich we all need to follow if we ɜ to have the gospel of Jesus at ɔrk in our community. Denomitional cooperation requires much ɜar and honest thinking, frank dission and common sense as Chrisın groups try to make the comunity in which they live a Chrisın community.

orking Together

One type of cooperation is that in ıich the denominations work tother to meet the social needs of e community. A long list of ways which this is being done could made but only a few will need to mentioned. In one community in ennessee where there was no recreion park for the young people to e, the churches worked together build a park that could be used all in the community. The memrs of the churches worked together build the park, to equip it, and ɔpointed a committee to care for it. In another community the church and other groups are cooperating meet the health needs of the peoe. The product of this cooperative fort is a hospital with clinics in ɔlated areas where the people may for treatment. Cooperation here paying off in better health for all ɜople regardless of denominational filiation.

The various denominations have ɜen working together in many comunities to help provide a program recreation which will really reeate people in body and soul. Here a tremendous area in which coɔeration is possible and will proıce results.

Another area in our social life in ıich the denominations are workg together and with other groups that of family life. In Buncombe ɔunty, North Carolina, of which ɜheville is the county seat, there is very active family life council. The urches of Asheville and the county sponsor this group and help make its program effective. One of the projects is to have courses on family life taught in the schools. This has been done with great effectiveness. Annually a conference is held which deals with family life problems. Ministers are frequently asked to serve as leaders of discussion groups in this meeting as is the juvenile judge and other leaders of the community. The schools cooperate by excusing those students who want to attend the conference and the people of the community respond by attending the meetings in good numbers.

Civic Responsibility

Closely related to the area of social life is the civic phase of community life. Youth programs such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and 4-H Club work offer denominations a way to cooperate with each other and with other groups in the community. Red Cross work depends heavily upon the support of the various church groups. All of the activities which have come to be included under the community chest work offer opportunities for the denominations to work together. In some sections churches work together to help administer funds which have been raised to aid the poor and underprivileged. This practice helps insure an even distribution of funds in the community.

One area of civic life in which denominations should work together more is that of good government. They should work to see that Christian men are placed in positions of civic responsibility.

Economic Aspect

Recently Roman Catholics, Protestants and Jews issued a statement concerning Man's Relation to the Land. They set forth certain principles upon which they could agree and these principles have many implications for rural life. Denominations can work together to encourage their members to consider together the economic aspects of their common community life. In order to work with some of the governmental agencies in the matter of soil conservation it is both desirable and necessary for communities and districts to work together. The churches can do much to encourage this cooperation if they will. A Christian philosophy of land ownership and use would, if followed, produce remarkable changes in these practices which represent the basis of much of the economic life of our town and country areas.

Other Types of Cooperation

Vacation church schools are being held in increasing numbers year by year. Frequently these are held on an interdenominational basis and because of this they reach more children than they would be able to reach if these were held by each denomination. In some small communities it is difficult to find adequate leadership for these schools and, by cooperating, a better school can be held than if each denomination tries to have its own school.

In some communities, during the summer months, union evening services are held. Outstanding speakers are secured because the denominations working together are able to bring these people to the community. A joint choir adds much to these services and contributes to the musical education of all in the community.

Denominations sometimes work together to sponsor and conduct leadership training schools. The International Council of Religious Education is willing and able to help with these projects. We certainly need leadership training in our rural areas and since many of our town and country churches are small they are not able to put on a training program by themselves. By working together, a community leadership training school may be held which will meet the needs of all the members of the churches. This is one type of denominational cooperation which we must stress more in the future.

Denominations are working together in councils of churches, the mutual exchange of parishes, the yoked field, the Union church, federated churches, the allocated field, affiliated memberships, the larger parish, and the cooperative parish. These are some of the ways in which cooperation has been at work to meet the challenge of overchurching. The ecumenical movement is beginning at the grass roots as well as at the national and international level.

How it Works

One illustration where many of these methods of cooperation have been used is that of the Swannanoa Valley of Western North Carolina. Here, six rural churches, representing five denominations, have banded themselves together into the Swannanoa Valley Association. For some time there was no formal cooperation among these churches. Then some years ago the idea of having a union Thanksgiving service was conceived. This was held and was so meaningful that it has been continued. Then a union Easter service was started.

Soon the members of the churches felt the need for a more formal type of organization and representatives met and decided to form an association. There would be ministerial and lay representatives from each church. The congregations would approve all major policies and plans. As time passed, a joint Bible school was held. Money was contributed by the Association to help pay for the Bible teacher in the public schools. A lay leaders' training school was established and conducted annually.

A religious census was taken of the valley by the Association and the results were used by the denominations for their evangelistic work. The Swannanoa Valley Association is an organization through which the churches of that Valley cooperate to make it a more Christian place in which to live. Through it the people in the churches are making their Christian witness, a witness that is more effective because of the cooperative spirit and actions of these five denominations.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" would be a good scriptural basis to judge cooperative efforts. Very often laymen are more responsive to cooperative ideas than are ministers. They should be the leaders in cooperative movements.

We must never forget that the basis of our cooperation is to be found in our Christian faith itself.

Does it Matter to Whom I Sell?

ROBERT L. CLINGAN

• Instructors in stewardship have always maintained that every Christian has a moral obligation to properly plan for the disposal of his money at the time of his death. Does it not follow that rural folk are morally responsible for the disposal of property, as well as of money, at the time of death or retirement?

The villages of America are the "old people's homes" of rural society. They are populated with men and women who, because of age and infirmity, have found farm residence either difficult or undesirable. Each of these former farmers must have some responsibility towards having the right kind of people on their farms. By "right kind," I mean those who will take good care of the buildings, enrich and not impoverish the soil—people who will support the institutions so essential to the total life of a community.

At one of the meetings of the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country I heard of a farm family that felt that kind of moral responsibility. The farmer was about to sell the farm where he and his wife had spent a lifetime. Asking the prospective buyer what he intended to do with the farm, he was indignant to hear the man reply, "I will never live there. I will rent it to whomever I can." The farmer said that he and his wife had developed that farm and invested their lives in the school, church, and the organizations of the community. They wanted someone to have it who would continue to build and not destroy the things to which they had given their lives. They refused to sell their farm to such a buyer.

The other day I talked with a widow who had the same moral sensitivity about a place of business which she and her husband had built with loving care. The prospective buyer planned to convert it into a bowling alley and in time secure a liquor license. She said she could not bear to see its desecration and starting a new line of business, she kept the place, continuing her investment in church and community.

Individual responsibility for the future affects an entire community when a farm, a home, or a place of business is for sale. I know of one piece of property that almost fell into undesirable hands but several people took an option on it and saw it sold to a young man who has become a pillar of the church and a leader in every constructive cause in the community.

This kind of thinking is fundamental in the formation of church and land committees all over the country. It brings to the church and community the kind of people who will be a blessing to rural America.

Stewardship does not stop with retirement or death. Christian stewardship is not limited to wise disposal of money. It also includes the sale of farm, home or a place of business. The entire community has a stake in the kind of people who buy into its life.

The Suburban Movement

• The suburban movement—"an irresistible reorientation and relocation of residence, work and way of life"—constitutes "a challenge to existing social and civic agencies for a more intelligent and effective service," declared Professor James L. Hypes, University of Connecticut sociologist at a recent suburban church conference held under the auspices of the Nassau County, New York, and Bergen County, New Jersey, Councils of Churches which have recently conducted extensive surveys of church conditions. It is expected that the findings of the conference will be submitted to the two national convocations on urban and rural churches.

Five Year Plan for Rural Church Extension Work

V. A. EDWARDS

n 1945, the Phelps-Stokes Fund d the Sharecropper Committee of e Home Missions Council jointly gan an intensive effort to improve egro rural churches. In the four ars of the program fourteen rural urch departments have been es- blished in the colleges and semi- aries of southern states. The fol- wing article will describe one of e proposed programs.)

The Rural Church Department Shaw University's School of Re- gion, Raleigh, North Carolina, un- er the direction of Moses N. De- aney and S. F. Daly, is doing sig- ificant work. The following list of rojects constitutes a five-year plan:

1. *Extension classes.* Two classes will be held at Shaw University each week during the first semester; from six to twenty classes will be held within a fifty-mile radius of Raleigh during the year.
2. *Landscaping church grounds.* The plan is to create among rural pastors an interest in improving their church grounds and surroundings, and to help them secure competent aid for the accomplishment of this task.
3. *Remodeling church buildings and building new churches.* The Department plans to give practical help in these significant undertakings.
4. *The Church Bus.* The purchase and use of church-owned and operated buses will be encouraged.
5. *Institutes for rural ministers and rural church women.* Annual institutes will be held for the purpose of bringing about a better understanding of the rural church and its problems. Methods of town and country work will be studied, and an effort will be made to correlate the activities of the rural church with the community.
6. *Land Policy.* The implications of Christian stewardship in agriculture and home economics extension services, soil conservation services and supervised farm credit loans will be emphasized. Our land policy will also encourage fathers and sons, as good stewards, to assume their Christian responsibility with reference to land use.
7. *Courses for resident students.* For students regularly enrolled in the college and, particularly, pre-theological students, courses will be offered in "A Christian Philosophy of Rural Life," "Methods of Church Finance," and "Rural Reconstruction and Program of the Rural Church." New courses will be offered as the need arises.
8. *Lord's Acre Plan.* This plan will be promoted for its value in meeting the many pressing needs of the rural church. Lectures and the circulation of appropriate literature will be used as promotion measures.
9. *Publicity.* Programs will appear in the columns of newspapers and church papers when recognition is warranted.
10. *Books and bulletins.* The plan includes distribution of free and inexpensive literature pertaining to rural life. The use of public and church library services will also be encouraged.
11. *Homestead for rural pastors.* Efforts will be made to help pastors who serve rural churches to understand the importance of living on the land, and to educate their members in the values of country living.
12. *Visual Aids.* Film strips, illustrating significant points in the curriculum, will be developed.
13. *Parish ministry.* Attention will be directed toward helping pastors—both graduate and student.
14. *Annual Spring Rural Life Series.* This series will be held for the purpose of stimulating the interest of all students in rural life values—not only those students who are taking courses in rural church work.
15. *Student recruitment.* Visits will be made to high schools each spring for the purpose of creating an interest in the opportunities and satisfactions of the Christian ministry and Christian community service as vocations. Visits will be made to colleges when it seems advisable.
16. *Research.* We hope that continued research on the agricultural situation in relation to the church and the community at large will be possible.
17. *Follow-up.* There is great need for systematic "follow-up" on the accomplishments of graduates of the Rural Church Department as well as on church leaders who have been enrolled in extension classes.

The Task of the Church in Town and Country Communities

• In a 70-page booklet, bearing the title given above, V. A. Edwards, director of town and country work for the National Baptist Convention, has compiled the addresses and statements of leaders of regional church leadership conferences which have been held at Shaw University, Raleigh, N. C., during 1948.

In the Foreword, Mr. Edwards explains the purpose of the conferences: "There are at least eighteen southern states in which an appreciable number of Negroes live on the land. In these states the National Baptist Convention has a total of 16,000 rural churches and over 2,000,000 members. . . . In an effort to reach a larger number of leading pastors, laymen and laywomen than would have been possible at one central place, three-day rural leadership conferences were planned and held during 1948 at several southern colleges to study life situations in rural America in relation to the church; to report on rural church efforts; and to formulate plans for more effective programs."

The addresses included in this re-

port emphasize significant needs of our rural churches and the communities which they serve, and indicate ways and means of meeting these needs—such as special training for the rural minister; leadership training courses for lay members; more effective religious education programs; improvements in economic, educational and health standards of the rural community; and better living conditions for the minister who serves a rural community.

This book may be procured from the National Baptist Convention, Fourth and Cedar Streets, Nashville, Tennessee, for 35c.

Needs and Training of Rural Ministers

• In a recent issue of *Church Management,* Cleveland, Ohio, Robert L. Clingan tells about the principal needs of theological students, as concluded by a group of rural ministers in the Cornell-Ithaca, N. Y., area. Some of them are:

Understanding of psychology; learning how to approach people; knowing the structural organization of the rural community; cultivation of neighborly relations; understanding people and their history; recognizing that no "cut and dried" program will work everywhere; seeing the rural ministry as a way of life; learning how to organize one's time; and seeing a cooperative ministry in contrast to a competitive ministry.

Lowdermilk in Africa

• Walter C. Lowdermilk, of Berkeley, Calif., former assistant chief of the U. S. Soil Conservation Service, technical consultant to Agricultural Missions, Inc., has left the U.S.A. for a ten months' survey of soil conservation problems in six African countries.

The main objective of his tour will be to promote better land use and to consult with local governments and British and American missionary societies. He will visit Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and other territories.

John H. Reisner, executive secretary of Agricultural Missions, New York, arranged the tour in cooperation with the British Colonial Office and said the scientist's visit was in line with the "historic missionary tradition of making scientific knowledge available to so-called backward areas." He also said it was further evidence that the missionary movement for years has acted as the vanguard of the "bold new program" proposed by President Truman as Point Four of his Inaugural Address.

Terming the continued deterioration of African lands as "one of the greatest threats to the future of Africa," Mr. Reisner said that emotional and economic appeals made by the government and missionary groups had not appreciably altered the problem of land conservation.

Dr. Lowdermilk, whose tour is financed by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, will make special soil erosion and water conservation studies in cooperation with local government agencies and hold conferences with religious leaders and African villagers.

A former Rhodes scholar, Dr. Lowdermilk served for five years as research professor of forestry at the University of Nanking. While with the U. S. Department of Agriculture, he made a special study of the relation of land use to civilization in nine countries bordering the Mediterranean and similar studies in Scotland, England and Holland. He has served as an adviser to the Chinese government on soil conservation and as consultant to the French Colonial Government in North Africa.

He is the author of numerous books, pamphlets and articles, including "Palestine, Land of Promise," and "Tracing Land-Use Across Ancient Boundaries."

"Distinctive Marks of the Rural Church"

• "Friendliness," "The Family Spirit," and "Dependence Upon the Soil," are the marks of distinction of the rural church, says Tyler Kriedeman in a recent issue of *The Telescope-Messenger,* publication of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, Harrisburg, Pa. These common bonds build for greater stability, both in the community and the church, and the author says that "where such bonds exist there is greater possibility for unity, and where there is unity there is strength."

Nationwide Christian Crusade

• Final plans for the Nationwide Christian Crusade have been announced by Dr. Edwin T. Dahlberg, chairman of the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

The Department has fixed October 2, 1949, World Communion Sunday, for the opening of the crusade. It will continue through the full calendar year of 1950.

Dr. Dahlberg, former president of the Northern Baptist Convention, said that the crusade will be directed by a national committee of sixty-two members composed of all the denominational secretaries of evangelism and representatives of interdenominational agencies, pastors and others, under the chairmanship of Prof. E. C. Homrighausen of Princeton, N. J. Dr. Jesse M. Bader is the executive secretary of the Department of Evangelism.

The crusade, said Dr. Dahlberg, grows out of the need of the church itself, as well as America's need. "If the churches are to become strong spiritually and numerically, they must be about their primary business of evangelism."

Plans for the crusade, two years in the making, envisage participation of more than 150,000 local churches and over fifty colleges and universities. Many churches will carry on their own evangelistic program, but in more than 300 cities weeks have been scheduled for evangelistic services when teams of nationally known evangelists recruited by the Department of Evangelism will take over the pulpits.

In announcing plans for the greatest evangelistic campaign ever undertaken by the Protestant churches of America Dr. Dahlberg said, "We will not have a better America until we have better Americans. Only a world movement towards Christ can offer any lasting hope for mankind."

GROWING GRASS-ROOTS:
Opportunities of the Rural Ministry

PHILIP HUMASON STEINMETZ

Few of us see the roots of the lorious vegetation we so ecstatically dmire as we drive through the ountry. Occasionally some disaster ke a hurricane overturns trees and xposes the mass of roots to view. ut most of the shrubs and crops ve out their lives without their oots ever being seen.

There is a similar situation in the hristian church. All too few of us ho admire the great beauty and ower of the city parish remember hat one source of its strength is the ittle country church. I suggest you ake a sample census in your parish r church organization, if you live in he city, and I am confident you vill find that half of the people who re present and active were "born nd brained" in some small country arish. Our city communities and arishes are dependent upon the ountry and energy spent in improving country churches is not enevolence but self-preservation.

But I'm not concerned primarily with pointing out the importance of ural church life. Rather I wish to hare with you some of the light I ave gained, during a dozen joyful ears in rural parishes, on the myseries of the growing process.

In the first place, growth cannot e accomplished just by more money. We have become so blinded y the productive power of machine ndustry and the methods which work there that we have forgotten hat in the church we are not operating a factory but are fostering growth of a living creature. We ave more to learn from farm methods than from those of big business, inance, and advertising. The secret f agriculture lies in making the nvironment as propitious as posible and then letting growth take place. Crops cannot be produced by rder or directive. They must be lanted and given time. We plant nd water but God gives the increase.

We Take Time Every Week

So in church life, prayer and steady personal witness are more conducive to growth than mass propaganda, big choirs, expensive organs, and startling sermons. In our little parish a small but earnest group spends an evening each week in prayer and silence, followed by such interchange of convictions and fellowship as God directs. Nearly every part of our parish life feels the influence of that activity. The series of events which culminated in the arrangement under which both churches of Ashfield, Mass., called the same pastor and together now operate one Sunday school and one young people's group, while continuing each its own form of worship and ecclesiastical relationships, can only be explained as the working of God through praying people.

Again, not only must much of the process of growing crops consist of letting life come and develop, but furthermore the process must be kept free of trade-marks. You cannot distinguish potatoes grown on different farms as you can automobiles made by different manufacturers. Life does not lend itself to labels. So Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Methodists, Roman Catholics, Quakers, Episcopalians face a common task.

God Gives Life

I well remember a meeting in a small Methodist church at which Monsignor Ligutti of the Catholic Rural Life Conference spoke. It was attended by people of Baptist, Methodist, and Episcopal churches and by several Roman Catholic priests. There was a sense of common cause that evening which I have seldom felt so keenly. I don't believe you can grow "denominational" roots; you need just "plain" roots. God gives life, and He does not limit Himself to items in one seed catalogue!

Finally, growth should result in better quality as well as in increased size. When a plant starts from a seed there is vast increase in size at first. There are more and more roots and shoots, rootlets and branches, and the land from being bare becomes covered with green. But then begins a long process of ripening. Development is no longer so much in size as in depth of root, in increased strength of trunk and branch, and finally in ripeness of fruit. It is this ripening process which is so much slower and less spectacular than the rapid growth in size which I know all too well we have failed to give the attention it deserves.

—Reprinted from *The Evangel*

Prayer

• Grant us, O Lord, so to bless Thee with grateful hearts for the bounty of Thine earthly harvest, that filled with Thy love we may bring forth fruit to Thee a hundredfold in this life, and in that harvest where the angels are the reapers we may be gathered as wheat into Thy garner; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

—*Anthology of Prayers for Public Worship*

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Tithing or Stewardship?

• Shall I tithe or shall I be a steward? Is there a difference? There is. We have frequently been told that we should tithe. A certain portion of our income needs to be set aside for the work of the church but there is one aspect about this that is distressing. By implication one gets the idea that one tenth belongs to God, nine tenths belong to me. But does it?

When one reads the parables of Jesus one gets a new picture. Always Jesus pictures man as a steward. He is entrusted with certain gifts, talents and goods. These he is to use. When the day of reckoning comes, a report is required of his stewardship. The question is never raised whether the man was a tither. The question is whether he has been a good steward.

The answer to the question raised in the first paragraph lies in being a steward who tithes. His tithe in this case may be more than ten per cent, in extreme cases, it may be less. However, as a steward, he never loses sight of the fact that he is but a servant of God whose every effort and purpose is to help and further the work of the Kingdom of God. Let's hear more of this emphasis on stewardship in our churches.

—From *The Mennonite*

Soil Conservation Calendar

• The Waldo County Soil Conservation District in Maine has published a calendar issued by and for the District. Major features of the calendar are four photographs depicting conservation practices that are widely used in the district, names and addresses of the district supervisors and the technical personnel working in the district as well as the 'phone number of the district office. A brief description of the district program is a significant part of the display. Ten small advertisements placed by local business men financed this venture. The best feature of the calendar is its heading:

Waldo County
Soil Conservation District
An Organization of Waldo
County Farmers
Dedicated to Saving the Land.

Urban-Rural Appreciation

• Much has been written concerning the relative value of a mutual understanding of urban-rural problems and opportunities, and it was in an effort to acquaint the young people of Bremer County, Iowa, with the "way of life" in a large city that the Bremer County Rural Youth Organization sponsored a three-day trip to Chicago in which ten rural young people participated. The Rev. C. W. Dehne, pastor of the Waverly and Warren Evangelical United Brethren churches, Waverly, Iowa, and Donald Anderson, County Extension Director, organized the tour, and they and their wives chaperoned the party.

Several members of the group had never traveled by train before, and the three-hundred-mile trip with sleeping accommodations and meal service was a novel experience for these young people. While in Chicago they visited a steel mill, the shopping center, The Chicago Board of Trade, the Museum of Science and Industry and the Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. They also attended a radio broadcast and a theatrical performance. "It is hoped," Mr. Dehne writes, "that this experience will provide the young people with a measure of confidence if employment or education makes it necessary for them to make their homes in a large city."

We might add that urban youth visiting rural communities have a better opportunity to observe the rural "way of life" than do rural youth who visit our cities and see "the sights" which only approximately two per cent of their residents have any knowledge of. In order to effect a deeper appreciation of "how the other half lives" rural visitors should also see the crowded quarters in which most of the cities' residents live and the thronging playgrounds where their children spend their leisure hours.

Only by knowing how the average working man lives—whether in town or country—can a real appreciation of the difficulties and compensations of urban-rural people be achieved.

Conversion of Missouri's Soils

• The fascinating story of Missouri's famed priest, the Right Reverend Monsignor George J. Hildner was told in a recent issue of *Hoard's Dairyman,* Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. This country priest has been instrumental in re-vitalizing agriculture in two different sections of the state of Missouri, and has promoted extensive dairy farming.

In addition to local recognitions, Father Hildner has spoken before farm and conservation groups throughout the United States and has received the award for Distinguished Service for twenty-five years of outstanding service in the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

Father Hildner asserts confidently that "soil conservation and soul conservation complement one another," and that it is the "sacred responsibility of the clergy, regardless of sect, to maintain a position of leadership in this work so vital to our nation's future."

"The Earth is Holy"

• The earth is holy because men did not make it, but man's relation to the earth must ever be a moral relationship which God has placed upon him, writes William P. Taylor in a recent issue of *The Christian Evangelist,* St. Louis, Mo. The worth and dignity of labor, moral responsibility and stewardship are lessons which the holy earth would teach.

Abundant Living

• *The Rural New-Yorker,* New York, N. Y., recently quoted National Grange Chaplain Joseph W. Fichter's reply to the question, "Is religion essential?" as simply: "Yes; today as never before in the history of mankind, religion is essential. Our one great task is to live a full life in a very irrational topsy-turvy world. We pass this way but once and we want to make the most of the present opportunities, not in a selfish way but realizing the sacredness of the personality as a divine gift from God."

Bless Ye the Lord

The God of harvest praise;
In loud thanksgiving raise
Hand, heart and voice;
The valleys laugh and sing;
Forests and mountains ring;
The plains their tribute bring;
The streams rejoice.

Yes, bless His holy Name,
And joyous thanks proclaim
Through all the earth;
To glory in your lot
Is comely; but be not
God's benefits forgot
Amid your mirth!

The God of harvest praise;
Hands, hearts and voices raise
With sweet accord;
From field to garner throng,
Bearing your sheaves along,
And in your harvest song,
Bless ye the Lord.

—James Montgomery

(One tune recommended is Allen 6.6. 4. 6. 6. 6.4.)

Tomorrow's Harvest

Many phases of rural Christian vork have been presented in recent ssues of *The Christian Rural Fel-owship Bulletin,* 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. "Objectives for Rural Christian Work," a section of V. A. Anderson's new book, *Rural Missions Tomorrow,* lists nine goals: health; work opportunities; avocational opportunities; education; beauty; right social relations with men; right family relations; right community relations; and right relations with God.

When these objectives are reached we will have no less than the Kingdom of God on earth and the church, as a part of the community, "must have a profound influence" on the attainment of all these goals, writes David E. Lindstrom in an article entitled, "Is the Rural Church Serving the Needs of the Community?"

In an article entitled, "The Church and Agriculture," Shirley E. Greene includes soil stewardship among the objectives given above. In this statement, which opened the Yorkville, Tenn., Conference on the Church and the Family Farm, Mr. Greene calls attention to the fact that "the country church, and the city church too, is dependent on the stability and prosperity of agriculture for its welfare." The title, "The Church and Agriculture," Mr. Greene says, is "the merging of two of the great creative forces in human life. It is based on the doctrines of Christian vocation, of Christian stewardship, of abundant living, of justice and community."

Rural People and Religion

• "The Christian religion is good for any people, and what we are concerned about is that there might be more of it among rural people."

John Bench, in a recent issue of *The Telescope-Messenger,* Harrisburg, Pa., says that if rural people could feel "sincere respect and concern for them and their interests and problems there would be more real rural religion." He stresses the "value of producing trained workers for leadership in rural churches," and feels that if church officers were to visit rural churches more frequently it would "give them a fresh respect for rural people and give rural people a fresh respect for church officers."

For Religious Films

• Six new branch libraries and a new major depository have been authorized by the Board of Directors of The Religious Film Association, according to W. L. Rogers, Executive Secretary. The move, Mr. Rogers stated, is part of a long-term program of expansion to supplement the services of existing libraries in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Dallas, St. Louis and Philadelphia.

The first of the new libraries will be located in Pittsburgh and will be operated for the R.F.A. by the Department of Audio-Visual Education of the United Presbyterian Church under the direction of the Rev. Orville Kuhn. The depository will be located in Atlanta. Definite locations for the remaining libraries have not yet been settled.

The Religious Film Association was established in 1942 to help the churches improve their educational programs through the use of visual aids and to provide for the distribution of recommended religious and educational films. It maintains offices at 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y.

Book Reviews

Passage to Walden. By Reginald L. Cook. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.00.

Henry David Thoreau's "correspondence with nature" is the main emphasis in this interpretation of certain aspects of the personality and career of one of the great men of Concord. "The source of his vitality was nature: the ultimate end of this vitality was cultivation of the human spirit." Mr. Cook believes that Thoreau came as close as any man to Emerson's concept of "man thinking."

All the affairs of state and church were no more important to Thoreau than a woodchuck's burrow. The life that this saunterer found in the woods was all "holy and heroic." The preference for the lonely life in the woods, including the brief period in a cabin at Walden pond, did imply an aversion to the institutions of men, according to Mr. Cook, but not to all men.

Thoreau cultivated the inner life. He was possessed of a sort of natural mysticism. He had intimations of a Great Companion and thought the whole of his life was filled with moral decisions, but he could not be a participant in a local church. He could write the essay on Civil Disobedience, but he joined no societies to advance the cause.

There are few references to famous contemporaries. This is an interesting consideration of a personality rather than a rounded biography. There is a description of the sinews of Thoreau's style. Mr. Cook is a member of the faculty of Middlebury College. He is a teacher of English who writes well.

—Benson Y. Landis

Adult Education in the Struggle for Peace. By the International People's College. G. E. C. Gad Publisher, Copenhagen, 1949.

On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the International People's College, Elsinore, Denmark, teachers, friends and students contributed various papers that are reproduced in this book, printed in English in Denmark. The International People's College is indeed a unique institution. The spirit and methods are those of the Scandinavian folk school for young adults. The student body and the teachers come from several nations. The college can now accommodate about 120 students. It has both rural and urban problems, and has stressed, as the title indicates, adult education in the struggle for peace.

—B.Y.L.

Men Working: A Study of Voluntary Labor Gifts. By Ralph A. Felton, Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J. 71 pages. 1949. 30c.

To the person who feels that the extent and significance of the church can be measured by the size of its membership and budget, this pamphlet will be very enlightening. It will be particularly enlightening to the person who has only a casual acquaintance with the church. He will be surprised to learn of the deep devotion and extensive participation of lay people in what is here defined as "voluntary labor gifts." Perhaps the most revealing thing will be the estimated cash value of these gifts.

To those who have given generously of "voluntary labor gifts," this pamphlet may seem a bit cumbersome and irrelevant. While an effort was made to measure the fellowship value of these gifts, it was not taken seriously and one is left with the impression that financial remuneration to the church is of more importance than the fellowship and community spirit gained from joint participation.

The most significant point of the study, it seems to me, is that in the mind of the average lay person there is little distinction between "spiritual" and "secular."

It will not be surprising, therefore, to find that there are almost unlimited ways of serving the church through "voluntary labor gifts." The church, as presented in this pamphlet, seems to be much more an institution of the people than those who cry against bureaucracy seem to think.

—Don F. Pielstick

Our Conservation Job

• "America can do a great job for itself and for the world by putting its resource house in order," writes Stephen Raushenbush in a pamphlet entitled, "Our Conservation Job." One of a series published by The Public Affairs Institute, 312 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, D. C., this report presents a study of our conservation problems and proposals for solving them.

Specific issues discussed in this presentation are soil production and protection, forest conservation jobs, and fuel, energy and water shortages. The proposals made concerning ways and means of bringing about adequate conservation, thereby stabilizing the economy of the nation and providing a solid basis for good living, should go a long way toward the attainment of the desired goal. This booklet may be procured from The Public Affairs Institute for 50c.

Awakened Country Church

• The Universalist Church of Henderson, N. Y., has taken on new life, Robert S. Wolley tells us in a recent issue of *The Christian Leader,* Boston, Mass. With the organization of a Rural Fellowship Club and plans for the improvement of church property, religious education and organization of church leaders, the congregations have already more than doubled the attendance of a year ago and members are "seeking new ways in which they personally can help to further the growing church."

No Rocking Chair Religion

• In an address before the Radio Parish Church of America, Portland, Me., Albert S. Goss, National Grange Master, admonished his listeners that a "rocking chair religion" will not suffice to meet the needs of our times. He urged each listener to exemplify the Christian principles and "actively participate in every practical effort to make our beliefs in Christianity effective throughout the land."

Rural Youth and Recreation

The Moe Parish, located ten miles th of Canton, South Dakota, has d sincerely to meet this issue in onstructive way. The parish con- s of three congregations, Roms- , Lands and Trinity, with a total mbership of about 1300 souls. nds Church lies in the center, with msdal Church four miles to the st and Trinity 3 miles to the east, the parish is quite compact.

The parsonage is across the road m Lands Church. With the par- age is a tract of 10 acres, previ- sly used as a pasture for cows and rses that the pastor might wish to ve. These ten acres have now been ned into a parish park and recrea- nal center for the young people of parish. It provides a place where young people can meet freely d enjoy the facilities available for eir enjoyment. A baseball dia- nd is provided. Lighting fixtures being installed for playing after rk. Teams have been organized all ages, playing teams from ighboring churches and towns.

Efficient leadership among the en in the parish has proven that ere is a place for that kind of tivity among our young people. ey have responded splendidly to orts made to provide wholesome tivity for them.

—Alvin A. Snesrud in the *Rural Lutheran*

To Thoreau One Hundred Years After Walden

squatter's right you claimed the stones and sands,
nd built the hut on wasteland with your hands.
hile many mocked you grew your famous beans,
nd tried to live your own life with good means.

ow many congregate to make their claims,
nd to appropriate some of your aims.
ere now they feed upon a spirit rare,
hat permeates the land, the wood, the air.

—*Rusticus*

Rhode Island Rural Church Survey

• Protestantism in non-urban Rhode Island, despite a large number of "sick small churches," increased its total membership 29 per cent in the seventeen-year period ending in 1947, it was disclosed in a survey made public by Dr. H. Paul Douglass, director of the Department for Cooperative Field Research of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

Making public the results of a survey conducted under the auspices of the Comity Department of the Rhode Island Council of Churches Dr. Douglass said, "A contrasting picture is provided by the Sunday schools where only one-fifth show growth."

Nearly half of the churches do not have full-time resident ministers. Forty-two are without resident ministers and fifty-two are served through joint-pastorates.

Three-fourths of the ministers are college and seminary trained. Half receive salaries of less than $2,000 annually and sixteen ministers are engaged in gainful secular occupations.

The characteristics of non-urban Rhode Island constitute a challenge to the churches, Dr. Douglass said.

In applying a corrective, Dr. Douglass said that by and large the separate denominations must work out the problems of their own churches, but he pointed out that in a large number of cases only cooperative action can remedy shortcomings.

The Pennsylvania Dutchman

• That's right! A Pennsylvania Dutch periodical at last—and an eight-page tabloid weekly at that. Just what people have been wanting—even needing—"this good while already."

Of course, the very first thing you will want to know is: Is it in dialect or in English? The answer is—most of it is in English. Naturally there will be dialect, too—stories, poems, rhymes, riddles and the like.

The Pennsylvania Dutchman is a popular and not a learned magazine. It will bring a weekly calendar—one whole page—on what is happening of Pennsylvania Dutch interest throughout the entire Pennsylvania Dutch country. There will be a weekly column on customs and beliefs, dialect stories, local history, family history, church history, folktales, folksongs, music, cooking, farms and farming, arts and crafts, antiques, games and sports—in fact the whole field of Pennsylvania Dutchiana will be covered.

There will be brief reviews of books, articles, dialect columns and radio programs of Pennsylvania Dutch interest. There will be weekly articles on Pennsylvania Dutch personalities in the news of yesterday and today. There will be hundreds of new Pennsylvania Dutch words for a dialect dictionary and, finally, for those interested in learning the dialect, there will be a short weekly installment of a Pennsylvania Dutch Grammar.

The Pennsylvania Dutchman is published by the Pennsylvania Dutch Folklore Center, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa. The editors are Alfred L. Shoemaker (folklore, arts, crafts); Donald H. Yoder (history, religion, genealogy); and J. William Frey (dialect, literature, music). The subscription rate is $3.00 a year.

Rural Life Clinic

• Believing that better religion, better farming and better living make an unbeatable combination, the Rev. Edwin Dodson of the Widener-Round Pond Methodist Church, near Forrest City, Ark., has established a Rural Life Clinic where one can attend a religious service, hear a talk on soil conservation and have the baby immunized against diphtheria.

Mr. Dodson and the Rev. Ethan Dodgen, superintendent of the Helena District of the Church, conduct the services. Talks on farm problems are given by farm agency experts and "shots" are administered by the county health nurse.

As if that were not enough, Mr. Dodson has also made arrangements for the serving of lunch at his clinic. Ladies of the missionary society take care of the kitchen detail.

—*Religious News Service*

Announcement Regarding the 1949 Convocation on the Church in Town and Country

THE PLACE AND TIME: Lincoln, Nebraska, November 8-10, 1949.

PROGRAM: A printed program is available on application to your Board of Home Missions or the Committee on Town and Country.

REGISTRATION FEE: A registration fee of $1.00 will be charged to help carry the expense of the Convocation. This is paid when you register at St. Paul's Methodist Church, 12th and M Streets, Lincoln.

RESERVATION OF ROOMS IN HOMES: If you wish a room in a home, *please make application in advance,* mailing this to the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. The Committee cannot be responsible for any request received in its office later than October 28, 1949.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: If you are going to a hotel, make your own reservations by writing directly to the hotels, which are listed in the printed program. In that event you need not write the Committee.

WHO MAY ATTEND: Everyone interested in the town and country church.

CORRESPONDENCE: Address inquiries to the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Correspondence

"My letter is to try to express to you, in some satisfactory measure the spiritual delight and inspiration that has come to many of us through the use of *Hymns of the Rural Spirit.* Again and again, through the months since it was issued, this book has been used in my own home with people gathered from near and far, including missionaries from many lands. Unfailingly, it has brought forth exclamations of heart-felt pleasure. Unfailingly, it has stirred deep enthusiasms for the beauty and inspiration of the many hymns included in the collection.

"Of course I am thankful to have my own hymn—The Lord's Acre hymn, *Spring and Seed-time*—included in the collection. Its presence in this collection will certainly lead many who use the book to be thoughtful of instituting the Biblical practice of dedicating the first-fruits of the ground to the Lord."

—DUMONT CLARKE, Farmers Federation, Asheville, N. C.

"TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH is a great medium for exchange of ideas between rural ministers. By such exchanges I am confident we are helping to foster the purposes of your journal.

"Yours for continued success in the rural field,

—JAMES E. HANKINS, Dungannon, Va."

One Thousand Rural Churches in Japan

• The Christian Rural Service and Training Centre, opened April, 1948 by the Church of Christ in Japan, "will provide for the training of self-supporting lay-preachers and 'evangelists,' and for rural orientation courses for ministers and seminary graduates who wish to become ministers of rural community churches," writes A. R. Stone in a recent issue of *The United Church Observer,* Toronto.

He also says: "The Special Rural Committee of the Church of Christ in Japan is thinking not in terms of two or even five years; it has a Strategy and Planning Committee working on a Twenty-Five Year Plan for the development of the life and work of the rural church . . . the ultimate aim for the twenty-five years is the building of one thousand rural community churches."

Rural Advance in the Orient

• The United Church of Christ in Japan is working on a twenty-five year plan for the work of its rural churches. This plan includes the building of one thousand community churches and calls for three hundred rural missionaries, according to an article in *Rural Missions,* publication of Agricultural Missions, Inc. The untouched rural half of Japan needs specialists in the following lines *now:* Home and Family Life; Health and Welfare; Youth and Recreation; Community Organization; Religious Education and Rural Worship; and Agriculture.

The opportunities of China, also, are urgent, but money and trained personnel are needed to carry out planned projects, writes Margaret Barnes, secretary of the North China Christian Rural Service Union.

For Your Outside Bulletin Board

Birds sing only for those who listen.

The best home furnishings cannot be bought.

Don't depend on the eraser end of your pencil.

Your actions today are your nature tomorrow.

God's lessons seldom end with a period.

Opportunity does not travel on schedule.

Even Florida just uses the weather it gets.

A hop, skip, and jump is a poor way to travel.

How tall are you, measured by the Golden Rule?

Friendliness is like a spring—not like a faucet.

—From *The Party Line,* a periodical of the Evangelical and Reformed Church